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'Kashmora', Rajinikanth & the Horror Masala Genre

'Kashmora' is the latest Tamil 'Horror Masala' Diwali release. Yes, this is a genre, and here is how it all began...

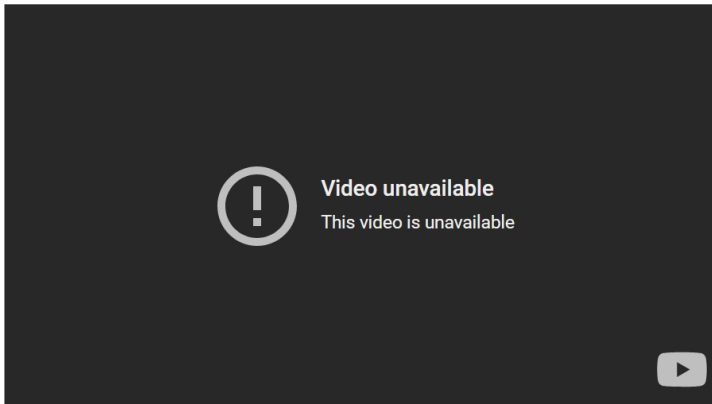
VIKRAM VENKATESWARAN
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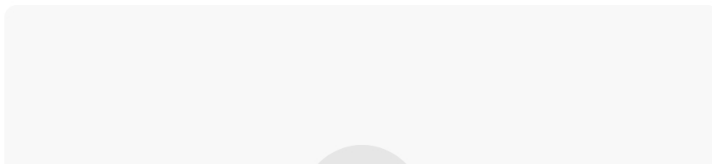


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Karthi's upcoming flick '*Kashmora*' (Evil Spirit) looks like a multiple-timeline voodoo magic horror flick. At least, that's what one can glean from the trailer. But nowadays, a horror film in Tamil isn't one that scares you, but one you watch with your family. Do not confuse this with horror-comedy, of which I believe Mehmood's *Bhoot Bangala* (1965, and 100% on Rotten Tomatoes), is definitely one of the first and best.

This is the Horror Masala Genre. And like all things filmy in Tamil, it begins with Rajinikanth's '*Chandramukhi*'. Here's the Japanese trailer, just for kicks.

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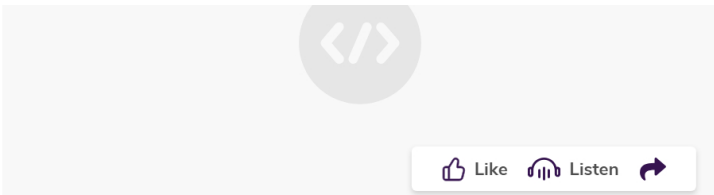
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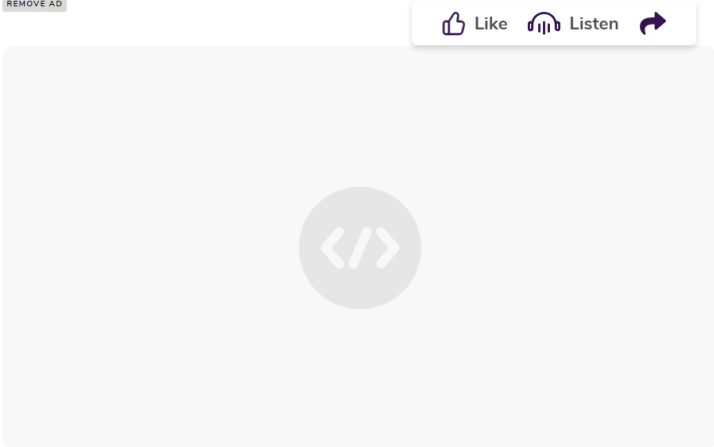
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Chandramukhi

In 2005, the absolutely brilliant 1993 Malayalam film '*Mani-Chitra-Thazhu*' (Lock with an Embossed Bell) was remade as a Rajinikanth pot-boiler. This was the Super Star's (note the title case) comeback movie, after the gargantuan flop '*Baba*'. For the first time, Rajinikanth had to return money to the producers, by selling part of his property.

The movie raked in the *moolah*, and rang in the trend of 'horror' movies, that were actually meant for the family.

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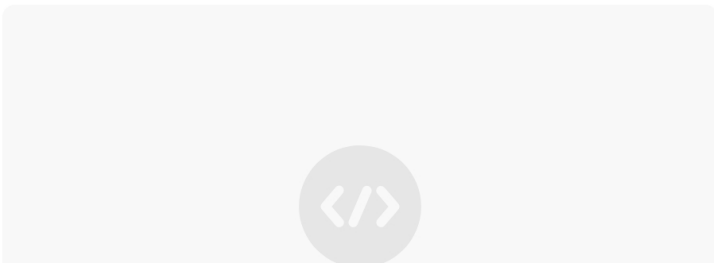
Pizza, OMG, LOL

Cut to 2012, and the poster boy of short films, Vijay Sethupathy acts in '*Pizza*', a 'horror comedy thriller' low budget movie. Instantly, he becomes the poster boy of low budget bumper hit movies. AND, the 'Horror Masala' genre booms.

This genre features movies with ghosts and demons, but with scares weaker than the 'house of horror' rooms in malls, that even grandmas with weak hearts are allowed into for 'kicks'. There's more comedy (intentional and otherwise) than horror, and the ghost eventually turns out to be benevolent.

But the legend of '*Kashmora*' is actually much scarier. It is the difference between children's fables and the actual morbid child-eating-demon stories they are based on.

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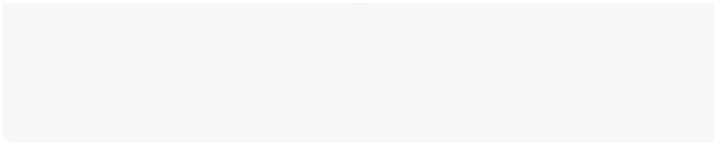
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'Kashmora': Story, Myth and Mythology

In common parlance in south India, this word denotes an evil spirit. It has featured in almost all of the telugu and tamil horror flicks of the 80s and early 90s, of which there were quite a few.

Most notable is the '*Tulasi Dalam*' (Telugu novel by Yandamuri Veerendranath) version of the spirit, popularised by the 1986 blockbuster horror '*Kashmora*'. It was a brilliant premise for a horror film.

Snapshot

If summoned, Kashmora kills the 'mark' in 21 days, making him/her suffer 21 ailments. No force on earth or the heavens can stop it!

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No geriatric south Indian worth his/her coconut *chutney* will be unaware of Kashmora. There will be drama, there will be pregnant pauses, and there will be first-person accounts of evil (as in mega-soap mutant-bindi villainous) relatives seeking out black-magicians and directing the spirit to destroy a sister-in-law or a half brother twice removed.

There is mention of such spirits in the Atharvana Veda as well.

So there.

Be afraid.

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Or Not

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The movie that is set to hit theatres this Friday, though, is directed by Sekar, whose previous movie was a 'Itharkuthane Asaippattai Balakumara', a mindless comedy flick that's as funny (or not) as you trying to pronounce the title of the movie.

But then he also directed *Rowthiram* (Anger), which was an action-drama I really liked.

So here's hoping that there's actually going to be a *chatpata masaledar* story to *Kashmora*, and that it'll at least give me goosebumps in a couple of places, as I fight to suspend my disbelief

right to suspend my subscription.

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GARIMA SADHWANI
Published: 08 Oct 2023, 10:00 AM IST

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Earlier this year, Prerna Kedia, a 25-year-old corporate employee based in Bengaluru, made a resolve that she won't ever bring up or talk about any [mental health](#)-related topics at her workplace.

What made her take this decision was how her manager responded to another colleague of hers. This colleague, Kedia tells **FIT**, confided in their manager about how she was having trouble adjusting to the office's work culture and was having a tough time.

While Kedia had assumed that the manager would be supportive, the latter


“You should go see a psychiatrist if you are mentally unstable.”

While Kedia has struggled with her workplace and wanted to take **mental health leaves** on several occasions, she could never trust her manager to approve them.

But Kedia is not alone in this. **Many young adults hesitate to ask their workplaces for mental health leaves.**

What is holding them back? **FIT** has a new feature for you.

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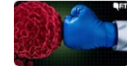
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Narges Mohammadi's Nobel Win: Hope for Women in Iran, Afghanistan, & World Over

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DEEPA PARENT
Published: 07 Oct 2023, 10:15 AM IST

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